



SAVE THE POWERHOUSE
savethepowerhouse@gmail.com

To:
Project Leader
Pymont Peninsula Place Strategy
NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

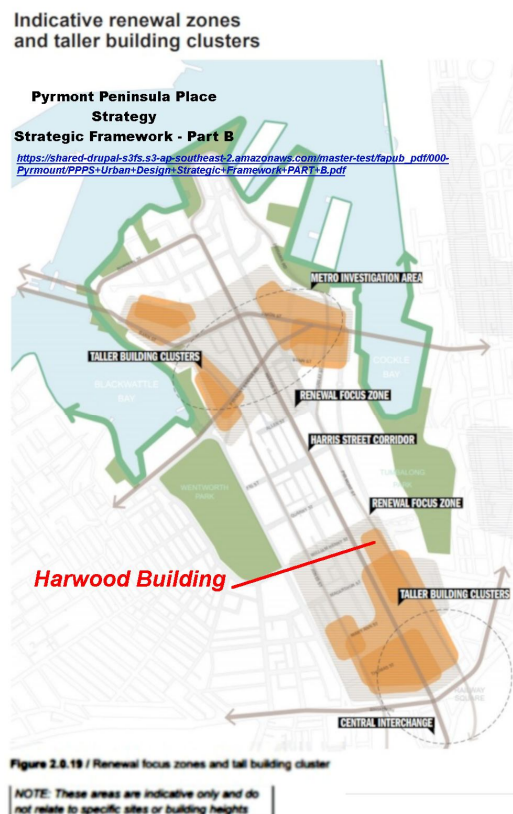
Ultimo, 12 September, 2020

DRAFT PYRMONT PENINSULA PLACE STRATEGY SUBMISSION

Save the Powerhouse is a grass-root campaign to stop the destruction of the Powerhouse Museum on Ultimo and the sale of its site to private developers. The campaign recognises also the fact that Parramatta deserves its own world-class museum reflecting its own culture and history. We communicate with our 300 members through regular emailing and a Facebook page (4,500 followers).

We wish to register our opposition to the inclusion of the Powerhouse Museum **Harwood building** in a proposed “taller building cluster”.

We note this cluster also includes the ABC headquarters!



The Harwood Building has been essential to the functioning and character of the Powerhouse as an internationally-acclaimed museum since 1988.

- from a heritage perspective

The Harwood Building is an integral part of the historic Powerhouse and Harwood buildings, modern Wran Bldg and Galleria complex, conceived by Sulman Prize winner Lionel Glendenning.

Current rumours that it may be demolished and replaced by a 1,500-seat “music-hall” (or a “fashion-“centre) are horrifying.

We are further alarmed by the recent state heritage listing of the “**Ultimo Power House**”, which registers only the external shell of the “historic Powerhouse” but omits the Harwood Building and Wran Building and Galleria, plus their interiors and contents.

Further, this represents a “**de-listing**” from the current City of Sydney local heritage registration (Sydney LEP2012 – item I2031) which has traditionally protected the interiors and contents of the historic Powerhouse.

- from an operational perspective

ICOM (the International Council of Museums) defines a museum as : “ *a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.*”

This places the collections (acquiring, storing, preserving, studying and exhibiting) as the Museum’s principal “raison d’etre”.

In summary, the Harwood Building is an integral and essential component of the Museum for preparing new exhibitions, building maintenance services, etc and is where most of the Powerhouse’s collections are stored, preserved and studied. Without it, the Powerhouse would cease to be a true museum but become a mere exhibition hall.

NB: we have similar concerns regarding the proposed facilities at “Powerhouse Parramatta” which do not offer any collection storage or curatorial space.

According to leading experts (including former Powerhouse Museum curators Andrew Grant, Ian Debenham, and Dr Andrew Simpson’s, testimonies to the August 21 Parliamentary Inquiry hearing), the museum could not function if all its collections and essential facilities were located 30km away in Castle Hill, as is proposed.

NB: if this were attempted, there would also be the risk of damage to delicate items during continuous transportation to/from Castle Hill, vast unnecessary expense and waste of staff time and increased environmental pollution from transportation vehicles.

Save the Powerhouse

